

The Father Seeks a Bride for His Only Son

Text: Gen. 24:1-67

Introduction:

1. There are two main strands of thought that run through this passage of Scripture:
 - Principles for Marriage.
 - Pictures of the Messiah.
2. In this message, we will focus on the beautiful typology of the passage. There is a beautiful salvation picture with the father sending his servant to seek a bride for his only son. We will consider this picture by looking at each character in the story and who they represent in the type.

I. THE FATHER DETERMINES (VS. 1-9)

We consider firstly how Abraham typifies the work of the Father.

A. The Father sacrifices his Son (Gen. 22)

1. We noted the beautiful type of the Father offering up his Son in Genesis 22. Abraham took Isaac, his only son, and offered him on the altar, picturing how God the Father offered His Only Begotten Son on the cross of Calvary.
2. Isaac came back off the altar alive, a picture of resurrection from the place of death. Christ rose victorious from the dead on the third day after his death on the cross in the will of the Father.
3. Interestingly, from Genesis 22, Isaac does not appear in the narrative until the end of this chapter (Genesis 24) where he comes out to meet his bride as she is being brought to him. In like manner, after Christ rose and ascended, he has not been seen again but will be seen when he returns to call his bride to Himself.

B. The Father sends his Servant (Vs. 1-9)

1. Abraham sends his faithful servant to find a bride for his son in a far country.
2. The servant pictures the work of the Holy Spirit who was sent by the Father on the Day of Pentecost to call out of the Gentiles "a people for his name" (Acts 15:14).
3. Salvation was God's initiative. We were "chosen in him before the foundation of the world" (Eph. 1:4) and are "elect according to the foreknowledge of God" (1 Pet. 1:2).
4. The bride is the Father's love gift to His Son. We usually think of the Son as God's love gift to us and that is true (John 3:16) but let us not forget that we have been given to the Son by the Father.
 - a. Psalm 2:8 "Ask of me, and I **shall give thee** the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."
 - b. John 6:37 "All that **the Father giveth me** shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."
 - c. This is a major emphasis in Christ's High Priestly prayer (John 17). Refer John 17:2, 6, 9, 11-12, 24.

II. THE SERVANT SEEKS (VS. 10-49)

The servant's work in seeking a bride for Isaac occupies the larger portion of the chapter. We note several parallels between the work of the servant and that of the Holy Spirit.

A. The Servant Finds (Vs. 10-27)

1. The servant was the one who sought and found Rebekah. In like manner, it is God who takes the initiative to seek the sinner through the work of the Spirit. He does this through faithful servants who proclaim the Gospel.
2. The servant offers precious jewels as the tokens of engagement (Vs. 22). The servant makes the proposal for the woman to accept if she is willing.

B. The Servant Testifies (Vs. 28-49)

1. The servant does not testify of himself but of the Father and the Son throughout the account. It is interesting that the servant is unnamed. He is very active in the account but the focus is on the son.
2. The 'master' (Abraham) is mentioned at least 22 times in the passage and the 'son' (Isaac) 13 times.
3. John 16:13-14 "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for **he shall not speak of himself**; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew *it* unto you."
4. The servant testifies of the tremendous wealth that the son has inherited from his father (Vs. 35-36). Rebekah can share in that wealth if she will accept the marriage proposal. In like manner, Christ has been appointed as "heir of all things" by the Father (Heb. 1:2).
5. In like manner, the Spirit comes to us, speaking of Christ and the riches of salvation that can be ours if we will submit to his invitation. When we got saved, we received the "earnest of the Spirit" (Eph. 1:14; 2 Cor. 1:22) (the down payment) which is God's guarantee and assurance to us that He will give us all the rest of our inheritance that awaits us in heaven.
 - a. 2 Cor. 1:22 "Who hath also sealed us, and given **the earnest of the Spirit** in our hearts."
 - b. Eph. 1:14 "Which is the **earnest of our inheritance** until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."
6. Note: This does not mean we are not to emphasize the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit as revealed in the Scriptures. The servant is visible and active in Genesis 24 but not the primary focus. In like manner, we cannot and should not ignore the Holy Spirit who is the third Person of the Godhead but we need to understand that the Spirit of God's desire and ministry is to make much of Christ.

III. THE BRIDE CONSENTS (VS. 50-61)

A. The Decision for the Bride (Vs. 50-58)

Rebekah was not forced to become Isaac's bride. She had a choice to make. Think about the choice that was before her and how it parallels the decision the sinner must make.

1. The Time for the Decision (Vs. 56-58)
 - a. The family's desire was to delay the departure but the servant insisted that they must go immediately. So, it is with the salvation invitation. Procrastination is a dangerous thing as it often leads to doubt which in turn leads to declining the invitation.
 - b. The sinner is to be reminded that life is as a vapour (James 4:14), that we are not guaranteed tomorrow (Prov. 27:1) and that today is the day of salvation (2 Cor. 6:2).
2. The Terms of the Decision. Consider for a moment what Rebekah was being asked to do.
 - a. She was asked to believe a man she had never met before. The only evidence she had was the faithful word of the servant and the tokens of the son's wealth he offered. This took a step of faith!
 - b. She was requested to go to a land from which she was never to return. In like manner, we are called to leave forsake this world for the life of a pilgrim and a heavenly city.
 - c. She was asked to marry a man whom she as yet had never seen. In like manner, we are invited to be the spiritual bride of Christ whom we have never yet seen with our eyes. 1 Peter 1:8 "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see *him* not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:" That's the miracle of salvation!

B. The Journey for the Bride (Vs. 59-61)

Now commenced the long journey to Abraham's house to meet his son Isaac. However, she was not alone. Throughout the journey she would enjoy:

1. The Servants Presence – he would be with her through this journey until she came face to face with her bridegroom. In like manner, once we are saved, the Holy Spirit never leaves us. He is with us throughout our entire earthly pilgrimage and will see us safely to the embrace of the Son. John 14:16-17 "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may **abide with you for ever**; *Even* the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you."
2. The Servants Protection – such a journey in those days would be fraught with danger but the bride would be preserved and protected, kept safe for her marriage to the son. In like manner, the Holy Spirit seals us the day we are saved and that seal is permanent and unbreakable, all the way till the day of our redemption.

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- a. Eph. 1:13 “In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were **sealed with that holy Spirit of promise**,”
 - b. Eph. 4:30 “And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are **sealed unto the day of redemption**.”
3. The Servants Preparation – no doubt the days of travel were occupied with discussions about the son as the servant prepared her to meet him. In like manner, the Holy Spirit is our teacher throughout our earthly pilgrimage, growing us in love for our Heavenly Bridegroom and preparing us to meet Him.

IV. THE SON RECEIVES (VS. 62-67)

As the caravan approaches the destination, Isaac lifts up his eyes and sees Rebekah approaching. Rebekah sees Isaac and lights off the camel in anticipation of meeting Isaac. What a beautiful picture of the moment when the bride is united with her bridegroom, face to face.

A. The Hour of the Meeting (Vs. 63)

1. Isaac came out to meet Rebekah in the eventide, as the day was drawing to a close.
2. In like manner, when this church age draws to an end, Christ will come forth out of the Father’s House and call us up to meet Him in the air.
3. For you personally, if the Lord tarries his coming, you will meet your Heavenly Bridegroom when the eventide of your life comes and you wake in God’s eternal day in the presence of your Beloved.

B. The Happiness of the Meeting (Vs. 64-67)

1. The joy of their meeting (Vs. 64-66)
 - a. The joy for the bride – Rebekah lighted off the camel when she saw Isaac (Vs. 64). What a joy it will be for us to finally see our Beloved Lord Jesus Christ on that day!
 - b. The joy for the bridegroom – Isaac was delighted to see his bride arrive. What a joy it will be to the Son of God to one day have His completed Bride with Him in glory and to see the reward of His sufferings.
2. The joy of their marriage (Vs. 67)

Conclusion: Summary of the type by Dr. M.R. Dehaan

We can see the typical and prophetic picture. God the Father too had an only Son. After He had offered Him up to die on the cross of Calvary, He too sent His servant, the Holy Spirit, represented and typified by Eliezer, into the far country of this old, wicked world to call out a bride, the Church, for His Son, the Lord Jesus. And that Servant was sent out on the day of Pentecost and has been on this journey now for nineteen hundred years, asking men and women to come and become the bride of

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the Master's Son. The same questions are put to sinners today, which Abraham's servant expected Rebekah to answer:

1. Believe a person you have never met before, even the Holy Spirit of God.
2. Go with Him, and allow Him to lead and guide you by faith into a far country from which you will never return as you leave.
3. Be married to a man whom you have never seen before. See 1 Peter 1:8.

This, then, is the simple plan of salvation. It is by faith. When we believe on Him, and accept the offer of the Son of God, immediately the Servant, the Holy Spirit, opens up the treasures of His grace to our eyes, even as Eliezer opened up the bags of jewels to show the riches of the son to the prospective bride. Then He clothes us with the raiment which the Son has provided, even His sinless righteousness. We set out on a new journey with the Holy Spirit, with only Him and the Bible as our guide. We may not know the next step, but we trust Him, and permit Him to lead.

Sometimes the days are dreary and hard, but when the journey seems long, the Holy Spirit tells us more about the One whom we soon are to meet and we take courage and plod on again. And then the Holy Spirit takes some of those precious jewels from the Book of our blessed Master, and with the glittering blessed promises of truth encourages us all along the way. All the way the Servant talks, not of Himself, but only of Him whom we are going to meet. And then one of these days, as the evening shadows or the closing day of this dispensation came to an end, and the night of the world approaches we will lift up our eyes and there suddenly in the field of Heaven we shall see Him, and the Spirit within us will answer, "That's Him," and lighting of the camel of our mortality, we shall rise to meet Him in the air, into the open arms of him whom, though we had never seen Him, we had learned to love. In His eternal tent of many mansions, He will bring us, introduce us to His Father and our Father, and the eternal honeymoon of bliss and happiness, where sorrow and pain can never come, shall be ushered in with all of its glory and splendour forever.